

4 Land Use and Environment

4.1 Planning Area Boundaries and Size

The Planning Committee resolved early in the planning process to limit the area for immediate planning purposes to a relatively small, manageable area to which we have applied the term the Jacksonville Rural Commercial Center and Environs. The area chosen is centered on what is known informally as "Four Corners", which is the intersection of the Jarrettsville Pike, running north and south, and Paper Mill and Sweet Air Roads, running west and east. The area includes the existing commercial core and the subdivided rural residential land on the periphery, as defined by RC-5 zoning. It is bounded approximately by Robcaste Road on the west, Southside Avenue on the north, Blenheim Road on the east, and Hillendale Heights Road on the south (Map 2, Appendix E), and is situated in the region as shown in Map 3 (Appendix E). The size of the planning area is approximately 577 acres, which is about 9/10 of a square mile. The Office of Planning estimated the 1997 population of the area to be approximately 600 persons.

The planning area encompasses several public service institutions including the Jacksonville Elementary School Recreation Center, the Chestnut Grove Presbyterian Church, the Phoenix Post Office, and the Jacksonville Volunteer Fire Company.

As noted in the Preface, the preparation of a community plan for the remainder of the Greater Jacksonville area will be undertaken subsequently.

4.2 Land Use Distribution

Several members of the Planning Committee and the Baltimore County Office of Planning conducted a land use survey of the planning area. The distribution of land uses was mapped (Map 4), and the amount of land committed to each of the major land use categories was calculated (Table 2).

Table 2: Existing Land Use Distribution, Rural Commercial Center and Environs, March 1998

LAND USE	ACRES	% OF PLAN AREA
Residential	332.5	57.6
Public Service	44.2	7.7
Office	4.7	0.8
General Commercial	27.5	4.8
Undeveloped (1)	153.0	26.5
Major Roads (2)	15.1	2.6
TOTAL	577.0	100.0

(1) "Undeveloped" includes agricultural, vacant, idle, and stormwater management land.

(2) "Major roads" include Jarrettsville Pike, Paper Mill Road, and Sweet Air Road.

As observed from Table 2, over half of the total land area within the planning area is currently in residential usage. About one quarter of the total is undeveloped, while the remainder is composed of small percentages of commercial, office, and public service uses, and major roadways.

The residential land contains low-density single-family detached dwelling units, exclusively. Existing homes are one and two stories in height. Residential lot sizes range from about one to three acres in size. As of March 1998, there were approximately 200 dwelling units in the planning area. The commercial center of the community features one large supermarket, three automobile service stations, four banks and a variety of other retail commercial, food service and business office uses. The majority of these uses are contained in three commercial centers: 1) the Manor Shopping Center, on the east side of Jarrettsville Pike and the south side of Sweet Air Road, 2) Paper Mill Village, situated on the northwest quadrant of the "Four Corners" intersection and 3) Craftsman's Village on the east side of Jarrettsville Pike north of Sweet Air Road.

4.3 Zoning

The planning area includes several zoning categories distributed over the area as indicated in Table 3 and in Map 5.

Table 3: Existing Zoning, Rural Commercial Center and Environs, March 1998

ZONING	ACRES	% OF PLAN AREA
RO	1.1	0.2
RO-CR	8.8	1.5
BL-CR	24.6	4.3
BM-CR	25.3	4.4
BR	5.9	1.0
RC-5	511.3	88.6
TOTAL	577.0	100.0

RO	Residential Office
RO-CR	Residential Office - Commercial Rural
BL-CR	Business Local - Commercial Rural
BM-CR	Business Major - Commercial Rural
BR	Business Roadside
RC-5	Rural Residential

4.3.1 Residential Zoning

The RC-5 zone allows a one-acre minimum lot size and a maximum gross residential density of 0.667 dwelling units per acre. The purpose of the RC-5 zoning classification is to provide for residential development in "appropriate rural areas" and at appropriate densities. Generally, this zone permits, by right, single-family detached dwellings, farms, schools, accessory uses or structures, and not much more than this. The RC-5 zoning classification allows a variety of other uses by special exception granted by the county Zoning Commissioner; however, not all of these uses are deemed appropriate and compatible uses within the planning area by the citizens of Jacksonville.

4.3.2 Business and Office Zoning

Jacksonville is identified in the 1989 - 2000 Baltimore County Master Plan as a "Rural Center", warranting special protections against incompatible business and commercial expansion or intrusion. There are two principal business zones in the Jacksonville village center, the BL (Business Local) and BM (Business Major) zones. These zones allow a wide variety of commercial uses, and many residents of Jacksonville have expressed strong interest against the establishment of some of them. While the majority of the Jacksonville Rural Commercial Center is protected from many of the more onerous bulk, height, setback, parking and signage standards which apply to these zones by virtue of a CR (Commercial Rural) overlay district, the same uses are allowed here as elsewhere in Baltimore County. The CR district does serve to protect the two established rural centers in the county from large-scale, out-of-character development encroachment, as the 1989 - 2000 Master Plan directs. Yet it does not limit the types of allowable uses to which many of the citizens of Jacksonville have expressed opposition. Moreover, the CR overlay district can be removed through zoning map amendments enacted by the Baltimore County Council or the Baltimore County Board of Appeals, leaving the more liberal BL or BM standards in place.

The planning area also contains several parcels of land along Jarrettsville Pike and Paper Mill Road zoned for Residential-Office (RO) in which professional offices are located. These uses serve as appropriate transitional buffers between village business uses and strictly residential uses nearby.

4.4 Natural Features and Environmental Constraints

4.4.1 Geology, Soils, and Topography

The geological makeup of the Jacksonville area consists of bedrock materials, specifically a crystalline schist known as Loch Raven Schist, containing mica, feldspar and quartz, according to Dr. Kenneth Weaver, a Jacksonville resident and retired director of The Maryland Geological Survey. The area contains Baltimore Gneiss, Cockeysville Marble and Amphibole, as well as Loch Raven Schist. Each of these formations contains variable amounts of fractures (joints). The bedrock is overlain by a variable thickness of unconsolidated soils and subsoil derived from the weathering of the bedrock. Rain falling on the surface of the ground percolates through the soil, subsoil and weathered rock into the fractures in the underlying rock. The fractures contain water below the water table and are the source of water that flows to wells drilled into the formations. The spacing, width and interconnection of the fractures determine the ease or difficulty of obtaining sufficient supplies of groundwater.

Loch Raven Schist, as well as gneiss, contain relatively little water due to their generally unfractured structures. Marble, by contrast, is a good water-bearing formation. This is one factor that may help to maintain the semi-rural character of the area. Whereas there is probably sufficient groundwater to supply detached homes on one or more acres of land, it is unlikely that it could support closely spaced residential development or large-scale commercial development.

The most common soil type in the planning area is Glenelg loam, a well drained, gently to moderately sloping (3% - 15%), moderately eroding soil type. According to the USDA Soil Conservation Service for Baltimore County, the Glenelg soils are the most extensive and most important soils for farming in the County, although they are also appropriate for other development purposes. These soils are generally very acidic, moderately permeable, and have an available moisture capacity that is moderate to high. Slope and the hazard of erosion are the principal limitations to use. Manor Loam composes the balance of the soil in the immediate vicinity. This soil generally runs deep, is rather acidic, moderately permeable to water, and is often found on sloping (8% - 15%) terrain -

similar to the Glenelg soils, and is also suited to farm and non-farm uses alike. Manor Loam soils, however, are subject to severe erosion.

4.4.2 Floodplains and Wetlands

The planning area is not normally subjected to heavy flooding. Perhaps this fact is attributable to the characteristics of the local soils and stream systems and the lack of extensive areas of impervious surfaces. A wetland area exists just east of Jacksonville Elementary School, limiting use of that area for residential development.

4.4.3 Groundwater Supply and Protection

The adequacy and quality of the groundwater upon which each household and business in Jacksonville relies for all their water needs is undoubtedly the most critical environmental concern facing this community, and perhaps the most important issue in Jacksonville. Over the years, parts of the community have been faced with problems of either insufficient well water or well water contamination.

Because of the characteristics of the bedrock underlying the greater Jacksonville vicinity, the groundwater production rate is quite variable. Often, multiple wells have had to be drilled to find sufficient water. Even on marble bedrock, water production may be inadequate if a well is not deep enough to draw from several fractures. Many wells in Jacksonville only afford enough water for a single home, not multiple homes or large-scale commercial uses.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, petroleum contamination from local automobile service stations was discovered, as well as contamination from commercial septic systems. The petroleum contaminants included benzene, toluene and xylene. The sewage effluent from the commercial septic systems caused the formation of chlorinated and non-chlorinated organics. Due to the composition of the underlying bedrock, only portions of the Jacksonville area were contaminated. The sources for all these pollutants have since been removed, and the area was monitored for groundwater contamination by the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management (DEPRM) until 1994. At that time, the remediation contracts with the service stations expired, and the monitoring equipment was removed. However, the remediation was not entirely successful, and areas of contamination in the immediate Jacksonville area persist to the present day. It is hoped that, with time and with no further addition of contaminants, the natural rainfall outflow will overcome this problem.

Despite the ever-present concern to each homeowner and business proprietor of their well running dry, the limitation on water supply may be also viewed as advantageous by a surveyed majority (in 1996) of Jacksonville's population who would prefer to see Jacksonville grow only slightly and be preserved as a semi-rural community for future generations. Limited water means limited pressure for new development.

There are positive strategies that can and should be employed, nonetheless, to better ensure an adequate water supply for all of Jacksonville's residents and businesses. These include:

- Limiting the area of impervious surfaces and maximizing infiltration measures on impervious surfaces in order to maximize the rate and amount of ground water recharge.
- In the commercial areas, where impervious surfaces are prevalent, installing rooftop rainwater collection devices or other infiltration devices to direct water into the ground or underground storage tanks for use in fire containment.

- Encouraging each business and homeowner to economize on water usage.

4.5 Land Use Goals and Strategies for Implementation

- **Goal 1:** To preserve the community of Jacksonville as a small rural center, while allowing restricted commercial growth within the Rural Commercial Center only. The Rural Commercial Center should be limited in size and have well-defined boundaries.
 - *Strategy 1:* Initiate and pursue the enactment of appropriate zoning amendments or other legal means that would serve to fulfill this goal (Sections 4.7 and 4.8, and Table 6).
 - *Strategy 2:* Take other appropriate actions to encourage or ensure the types of business uses desired by the community, with the utilization of existing vacant commercial spaces receiving the highest priority. The creation and application of a new zoning classification should be considered, one which would effectively prevent the establishment of inappropriate uses in the Rural Commercial Center.
- **Goal 2:** To bring about a more orderly and aesthetically pleasing development pattern in the community of Jacksonville.
 - *Strategy 1:* Seek the implementation of zoning changes to achieve an orderly, compatible and generally sound development pattern on the remaining developable land and a consistent scale among new commercial uses within the Jacksonville Rural Commercial Center (Table 6).
 - *Strategy 2:* Adopt design guidelines to promote aesthetic compatibility.
- **Goal 3:** To protect groundwater resources, including recharge areas, in order to ensure an adequate water supply for current and future residents and commercial users.
 - *Strategy 1:* Require all future development to minimize the use of impervious surfaces and require the installation of effective stormwater infiltration devices.
 - *Strategy 2:* Work with both Baltimore County and the State in an effort to eliminate any residual groundwater contamination.
 - *Strategy 3:* Make the community aware of the importance of water conservation for each user's own benefit and to encourage each business and homeowner to economize on water usage.

4.6 Future Land Uses

The Land Use Plan map (Map 6) shows the proposed future land use pattern for the planning area. It is intended that this map establish the basis for zoning.

The Land Use Plan map does not distinguish between existing and future development; however, the planning area is not projected as a dynamic growth area. The potential to accommodate new growth is very limited because of the small amount of undeveloped land suitable for future development.

Each of the land use categories depicted on the Land Use Plan map is described below.

The **Rural Residential** land use designation is applied to areas which should be zoned RC-5. The RC-5 classification allows single family detached houses as the predominant permitted use.

The minimum lot size is one acre and the maximum permitted gross residential density is 0.667 dwellings per acre.

Most of the Rural Residential land is already developed. Only about 65 acres of land is available for future major land subdivision (i.e., a subdivision involving 4 or more lots).

Residential Office areas are locations where office uses should be permitted within the existing residential structures. These areas are intended to serve as a transitional buffer between the Rural Residential areas and nonresidential development. These areas are appropriate for ROA zoning. The ROA classification will help retain the residential character of the existing structures, but allow them to be used for office purposes.

The areas proposed for **General Commercial** and **Office** uses are concentrated at or near Four Corners. These lands generally have direct access to a major road (i.e., Jarrettsville Pike, Paper Mill Road, or Sweet Air Road).

The **General Commercial** and **Office** areas are viewed to comprise the Rural Commercial Center. The Rural Commercial Center boundary is indicated on Map 7 in Appendix E. This boundary was delineated based on the existing land use and zoning patterns, the existing and anticipated road system, and the desires of the local community. The proposed boundary of the Rural Commercial Center should not be expanded. Business zoning in the planning area should be contained within the Rural Commercial Center, except for the Jacksonville Volunteer Fire Company property, which is zoned BR. The BR zoning for the fire station should be retained as long as the fire company owns the property. In the event there is a transfer of ownership, the property should be rezoned to RC-5. Another exception is the potential building site for the new Phoenix Post Office, which should be zoned BL prior to construction and BL-CR after construction (see Section 6.6).

The Rural Commercial Center is not intended to provide the range of services one would find in an urban or suburban area. Commercial services should be limited to those serving the convenience needs of the people who choose to live in the surrounding rural residential or agricultural environment. Food stores, small retail stores, personal service businesses, eating places, and professional offices are the primary types of activities contemplated for the Rural Commercial Center. A listing of commercial uses which are not desired is contained in Section 4.9. In general, undesirable uses are those which may create significant adverse environmental effects, attract large volumes of traffic and have continuous customer turnover, or require inappropriate architectural design, excessive paved areas, or numerous curb cuts. The prevention of such uses will require an amendment of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations. This could be accomplished either by creating a new commercial zoning classification or by modifying the CR district regulations.

The **General Commercial** designation is generally applied to those areas which are intended to be zoned BL-CR or BM-CR in order to provide for the continuation and future development of a variety of commercial activities at an appropriate development size and scale.

The **Office** designation is applied to those areas which are intended to be zoned RO or RO-CR in order to provide for the location of office uses and to provide a transition between residential uses and General Commercial areas. Future business uses in these areas, whether or not zoned CR, should be limited to offices.

Properties in the Rural Commercial Center should maintain the CR district overlay. An exception is the existing RO zone on the north side of Paper Mill Road. Also, the potential building site for a new 35,000 square foot supermarket to be located on the west side of Jarrettsville Pike just north of Paper Mill Village Shopping Center should be zoned BL in order to permit construction of the supermarket as a matter of right. After completion of the supermarket construction, this site

should be rezoned to BL-CR so that the CR district regulations will apply to any future change of use.

The **Community Facility** category reflects the locations of the Jacksonville Elementary School Recreation Center, the Jacksonville Volunteer Fire Company, and the Chestnut Grove Church. It also reflects the potential location of the new Phoenix Post Office on the west side of Jarrettsville Pike north of Paper Mill Road (see Section 6.6).

Stream System Open Space represents areas where development is not suited. These areas consist of land located in a 100-year flood plain, wetlands, and stream buffers.

Open Space/Limited Development areas are today primarily open space in character. They are areas that are not particularly suited for, or needed at the present time for, any of the other land use designations. They should continue primarily as open space and, where appropriate, be used as a buffer between non-residential and residential uses. Other uses within these areas, however, may be considered as specific demands arise, if the individual sites are appropriate. These areas should be zoned RC5, except for the former church property at 14346 Jarrettsville Pike which has been converted to an office use. This property should retain its RO-CR zoning classification.

The County should pursue the acquisition of land for recreation within the planning area as a means of adding recreation facilities and enhancing Jacksonville's role as a rural center. There are three parcels of land potentially useful for recreation purposes. All three parcels are undeveloped and adjoin the Jacksonville Elementary School – Recreation Center site. These parcels are identified in Table 4 below and on Map 8 in Appendix E.

Table 4: Undeveloped Parcels Potentially Useful For Recreation Purposes

Location	Tax Map	Grid	Parcel	Acreage
1.	43	6	178	29.84
2.	35	24	47	1.11
3.	35	24	194	1.73

The development of recreational facilities on this land would help fulfill the recreation needs of the Greater Jacksonville Area. Potential facilities include athletic fields, nature trails, and parking areas.

4.7 Recommended Zoning Map Amendments

The recommended zoning map amendments are presented in Appendix F. These changes are intended to bring the community's zoning into conformance with the recommended land use. The recommended business and office zoning should be adopted and remain until any new zoning classification is enacted that would be more appropriate in achieving the land use goals identified above.

4.8 Proposed Supplemental Zoning Rules for the Rural Commercial Center

1. The rezoning of ROA zoned parcels to a business classification is not consistent with this plan and will not be supported. The intent of this Plan is keep ROA parcels zoned ROA so that they will remain compatible with both the residential and commercial uses between which they exist and to serve as a transitional buffer between the two. It is definitely not

the intent of this Plan that the ROA zoned properties later be converted to a higher business classification, thus defeating the purpose of the existing and proposed ROA designations.

2. No rezonings to business classifications higher than what is herein proposed (see Table 6 and Appendix F) shall be supported by the Greater Jacksonville Association.
3. Any principal use allowed either by right or by special exception, within a CR (Commercial Rural) District (pursuant to the special regulations for CR districts under Section 259.3 B.2 of the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations), but not otherwise permitted in any underlying zone, either by right or by special exception, shall not be permitted.
4. Signage amortization shall be 5 years.

4.9 Inappropriate Uses of Land in the Jacksonville Rural Commercial Center

The Greater Jacksonville Association finds the following types of land uses, permitted either by right or by special exception, within the Business Local (BL), Business Major (BM) or RC-5 zones, pursuant to the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations, to be inappropriate for the Jacksonville Rural Commercial Center except for those currently in place as of May 1999:

convalescent homes	tourist homes, boarding or rooming houses
fast food or drive-through restaurants	billiard rooms or halls or arcades
bowling alleys	dry cleaners, except for drop-off and pick-up
fortune-telling businesses	helistops or heliports
laundromats	taverns or night clubs
social clubs with liquor licenses	storage yards (for heavy equipment, vehicles, etc.)
automotive service or filling stations	car washes
life care centers	funeral service establishments
motels or hotels	striptease businesses
cinema theatres	animal boarding facilities
automobile sales establishments	sheetmetal businesses
electroplating operations	paint shops
catering halls	pawn shops
printing, lithography or publishing facilities	warehouses
commercial film production businesses	excavation or quarrying operations
research institutes	miniature golf courses
baseball batting ranges	wireless communications towers
mini-storage facilities	